

The Missouri Public Service Commission

Informed Consumers, Quality Utility Services, and a Dedicated Organization for Missourians in the 21st Century

WATER QUALITY ISSUES

The state's primary responsibility with water quality lies with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Drinking Water Program. The Missouri Public Service Commission usually works in cooperation with DNR since water quality issues also affect quality of service.

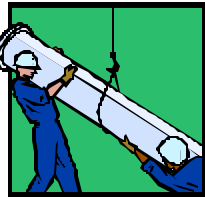
WATER PRESSURE PROBLEMS/DISCOLORATION

State regulations require water utilities to provide a minimum of 20 pounds per square inch (PSI) water pressure at the point of delivery under normal flow conditions. Abnormal conditions such as water main breaks and high flows used for fire protection, can substantially reduce pressure or even cause an outage. For systems that cannot maintain minimum pressure, a number of things might need to be considered to improve pressure; this could include booster pumps for certain areas, increased water main size, and taller storage tanks. Discoloration is most often caused by sediments that normally accumulate in water mains. "Flushing" the lines often cures the problem. Discoloration can also be the result of oxidation of iron or other minerals. If this is the case, chemical treatment may be necessary.



WATER MAIN BREAKS OR LEAKS IN PIPES

If you discover a leak in a water line, you should know who is responsible for the costs of fixing it. In addition to the water mains, many water companies are responsible for the individual customer's pipeline that is connected to the main up to the customer's property line. Some utilities require customers to maintain the entire service line from the water main into the building. Most utilities do not maintain water service lines within the customers' property.



ESTIMATED CHARGES & METER READINGS

Most water companies make every effort to read water meters regularly. However, not being able to access a customers' premises, or inclement weather may prevent timely reading of meters. In such cases, water usage may be estimated. Whether the estimate is high or low, any inaccuracies would be automatically corrected when the meter is actually read during a subsequent billing cycle. If there is an unusually inaccurate underestimation, resulting in a large bill after an actual reading, then customers could request a payment plan.



DO YOUR HOMEWORK

When buying a home, new owners should do their homework about the qualifications of their water suppliers, *before* they purchase the property. Check if the supplier is operated by the city, county or other entity. The PSC regulates the rates, fees and operating practices of 69 privately-owned water companies.



For more information



Created in 1913, the Missouri Public Service Commission (PSC) regulates over 1,000 investor-owned telecommunications, water and sewer, natural gas and electric utilities. The PSC works to ensure that Missouri citizens receive safe, reliable and reasonably priced utility services. If you have an inquiry, billing question or service-related problem that your utility provider cannot answer, please call the PSC at **1-800-392-4211** or visit our website at **www.psc.mo.gov**